

Series I
Correspondence,
1932-1973

Box 3, Folder 28

July 12, 1949 -
June 13, 1950

0789

NAVAL WAR COLLEGE
Newport, R. I.

July 12, 1949

Mr. J. Joseph Sullivan
Attorney and Counsellor at Law
111 Sutter Street
San Francisco 4, California

Dear President of the Board of Advisors, Joe:

Thank you very much for returning to me the speech of Defense Secretary Johnson. I will now return it to Mr. Baer who, no doubt, will toss it into the wastebasket.

Thank you very much for your comments concerning my brother's Will contest in the Court of Thomas M. Foley, Superior Judge. My brother felt exactly as you do in your letter, that he would have won his case eventually-- certainly, in the Appellate Court. He also felt that there was some doubt concerning the jurors, because the American Jury System has a serious drawback, viz, that jurors often act on emotion, without due regard to the facts. After the trial, some of the jurors told me that they thought everything my brother said was absolutely true but on the other hand that they were concerned about the old women. My opinion is that they had a right to be concerned about them but their assignment as jurors in the court was for the purpose of determining the merits of the case based on the measure of the evidence offered and not on some emotional concept. I have taken the liberty of forwarding your letter to my brother who will be quite pleased to hear what you have to say. You see, for some strange reason my brother, like myself, seems to think that you are a pretty fine fellow.

I want you to know that I thoroughly enjoyed meeting you again and I am particularly pleased at your success in the political field. The helpers around the Bohemian Club seem convinced that you are to be the next Mayor and I am glad because we need someone of character in the Mayor's Chair.

I was awfully sorry when I left to note that someone had been appointed to the Board of Harbor Commissioners. I had thought that you were somewhat kidding when you told me that I could have that assignment if I desired it. I shall remember this fact with intense interest in the future and I shall look forward to an assignment on that Board if I can physically handle it. Don't let this worry you!

0790

Take care of yourself and if you are able to get East, don't forget to look me up, should you arrive in this area. Also, don't forget to look up Vice Admiral Fechteler should you arrive in Washington.

I hope that you were successful in your interest in the Military Pay Bill. It apparently will come out of the Armed Forces Committee with a favorable vote and will be placed on the floor of the Senate on the 21st of this month. I certainly hope for the good of the armed services that it passes.

I was awfully sorry that I did not see Mrs. Sullivan, but I have no doubt that you told her of my build and of the shrinking nature of my masculine curves.

Warmest personal regards,

Your old friend,

RWB:ca

R. W. BATES

0791

Naval War College
Newport, R. I.
July 18, 1949

Mr. Francis Baer
Senior Vice Chairman
Board of Directors
Bank of America
San Francisco, California

Dear Franie:

I am returning to you as an enclosure the address by Secretary Johnson, which you so kindly loaned me in San Francisco and which has only been returned to me today by Joe Sullivan who borrowed it. It is a very interesting talk and I have no doubt that it was of value in conveying to the listeners some conception of the broadening of view of our Secretary.

It was wonderful to see you out in San Francisco. You are a very "meetable" fellow and I can well see why you are the Senior Vice Chairman of that tremendous Bank. I shall always watch your movements with interest and I will personally never be satisfied until we remove the "Senior Vice" from the front of your title, thus leaving it simply Chairman of the Board. I am one of those who believe that we must always have an objective and must lay our plans accordingly if we wish to achieve that objective. I frankly did not quite achieve the objective which I had set for myself but the reason I did not was because another objective intervened and I decided that although I still wished to accomplish the first objective, I did not choose to do it by losing the second. In other words, I sleep nights.

I certainly hope that you enjoy your stay in the Grove. I also hope that you will do what I suspect you had in mind doing while I was out there, viz, to really take a holiday and remain in the Grove during the week. We both agreed at my luncheon that that was the best time to be there. I hope my doctor brother comes up there to see you because I feel he has the same admiration for you that I have. This is interesting because our training has been so different throughout the many years.

I sincerely trust that you and Joe Sullivan will have an opportunity to know one another better. Joe was with me in the War and was a very fine Intelligence Officer. He has plenty of courage, and under the worst conditions always seemed level-headed and calm.

I am back at work at the War College and hope to be through my labors in November. I will probably remain East until the Army-Navy Football

0792

Came and then I will proceed West again, at which time I shall wish myself the good fortune of seeing you again.

Warmest personal regards, I am, as ever,

Your old friend,

R. W. BATES
Rear Admiral, USN, (Ret.)

RWB:ca
Encl.

0793

NAVAL WAR COLLEGE
NEWPORT, R. I.

21 July 1949

Vice Admiral William Fochteler, USN
Pentagon Building
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Bill,

I noted with interest, a day or so ago, and everyone up here noted the same thing, that the Senate Armed Forces Committee had voted to bring the military pay bill out of committee so that it will now be voted on by the Senate as a body. This was a great achievement for you and your staff and I wish to be one of the many who have already commended you on this successful achievement. You have the big hurdle before you still, of course, but we feel that you will win out in the end.

While in San Francisco, I was asked to contact several prominent citizens with regard to the pay bill. I did so and found them entirely favorable. Someday when I see you I shall tell you who they were because I shall be interested to know whether they had any particular effect. Naturally, I am doing the same thing up here and I hope that Rhode Island's support will be thrown to the Navy.

My two months in California were swell; the weather was perfectly wonderful and I enjoyed myself thoroughly. I am now back on the job at the War College and hope that the product of my endeavors will meet with favor everywhere. Very frankly, I have been quite delighted at the Fleet comments concerning the Coral Sea and Midway. Savo Island is more difficult than any of these, somewhat to my surprise, because the job of evaluating who did what to whom is very difficult and tortuous.

I regretted very much to discover that neither you nor Mick had been able to borrow my apartment during my absence. Naturally it was a disappointment to me because I was quite anxious that you and Mick should keep your health.

Kindest personal regards and congratulations again on your marvelous accomplishment.

I am, as ever, your old friend,

R. W. BATES
Commodore, USN

| |
|----|
| 00 |
| 01 |
| 10 |
| 11 |
| 12 |
| 13 |
| 14 |
| 15 |
| 16 |
| 17 |
| 18 |
| 19 |
| 20 |
| |
| |
| |
| |

0794

22 August 1949

Rear Admiral W.N. Thomas, ChC, USN.
Navy Department
Washington, D.C.

Dear Thomas:

I noted with a great deal of concern that you have decided to retire from the Navy of your own volition and would be relieved about 1 September. You have been a most excellent Chief of the Chaplain Corps and your career has given many other chaplains a high ideal to shoot at. I wish you well in your future operations in civilian life and trust that whatever you do will be to your liking. Certainly it will be to the liking of your friends.

I am also concerned in noting your departure as to whether the Navy hymn which I modified during the war and which was used by Admiral Turner by special issue to the amphibious forces in the Pacific, is to be published in the new Navy Hymnal. You told me several months ago that it was to be included but I have heard nothing further. Could you take a moment off to tell me a little about it? For your information your predecessor, Admiral Workman, also told me that it was to be included in the new hymnal.

Please feel that I am writing to you really to bid you goodbye more than to discuss this hymnal. Nevertheless, I am interested as you might well know.

With fondest personal regards,

R. W. Bates
Rear Admiral, USN.(Ret.)

0795

16 September, 1949

Prudential Life Insurance Co.,
Newark, New Jersey.

Gentlemen:

I am the holder of Policy Number 156602 OAKX. This is a straight life policy for \$5000. which has been in force, I think, since 1914 or 35 years. Today, I received a notice that I owe a premium of \$79.25 without any dividend whatsoever being shown. As this is the first time that I remember when I did not receive a dividend of about \$16.00, I am writing to ask information as to why, in a boom year, the Prudential Life Insurance Company cannot meet its dividend requirements.

Also, for your information, I expect to be physically retired from the Navy on 1 November of this year with a left bundle branch block of my heart. I do not know what my percentage of disability is but I understand it can be as much as 100%.

What I wish to know is this. In view of my disability clause, do I now have to pay premiums? Am I not premium exempt with the policy in full force?

Very truly yours,

R. W. BATES,
(Rear Admiral USN(Ret))

0796

September 22, 1949

Mr. Wilmarth Lewis
Harrison Avenue
Newport, R. I.

Dear Wilmarth:

It was very kind of you to address the Quendecim Club on Tuesday night and all of the membership enjoyed your discussion. The lecture was evidently a timely one as some of the guests seemed to have only limited knowledge of the ancient background of that Library. Very frankly when you mentioned the title of the address I was somewhat alarmed as I felt that it might frighten the listeners. However, I am glad to say that it enthralled them. Thanks again!

It was nice to have lunch with you at your home the other day and it was almost as nice to have lunch with you here at the Officers' Club yesterday. You are a very fine product of our Sovereign state and when I get out there, I shall extoll you even more than did the New Yorker. The Bohemian Club boys should know about Charles' brother.

If I don't see you before you leave for Connecticut I wish you "Bon voyage". Possibly I may succeed in dropping in on you and also on Harry Hunter, prior to my departure from this area.

With warm personal regards to yourself and to your charming wife, I am, as ever,

Your old friend,

R. W. Bates
Rear Admiral, USN (Ret.)

0797

NAVAL WAR COLLEGE
NEWPORT, R.I.

20 September 1949

Captain R. C. Parker, USN
Room 2418
Department of the Navy
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear R.C.:

I am sending you by registered mail the additional pages which we have completed, and some corrected pages for entry in your folder on the Battle of Savo Island. I am particularly anxious that you should read as much of this as you can before you retire on 1 October, so that we may have the value of your rich experience.

If you will study this analysis you will find that I have been punctilious in putting down the facts as they appear even in more detail than is customary with me, because the battle lessons are of such importance as to merit discussion. I have been almost appalled by the command errors made within our cruisers and destroyers, and somewhat less appalled by the command errors made by the Japanese. I have been unable to go into the Japanese ships as thoroughly as into our own because I have no information concerning the internal operations of the Japanese ships. However, the lessons of command as demonstrated by many of the Japanese commanders have been discussed and I hope that you will agree with what I have said about them.

You will be interested to know that Captain Puleston has been assisting me by reading the battle of Savo Island as far as I have gone. He is about half through. He has already commented very favorably upon the thoroughness of the study and the remarkable failures of command exhibited by both sides as brought out by this analysis.

| |
|----|
| 00 |
| 01 |
| 10 |
| 11 |
| 12 |
| 13 |
| 14 |
| 15 |
| 16 |
| 17 |
| 18 |
| 19 |
| 20 |
| |
| |
| |
| |

0798

Capt. R. C. Parker -2- 20 September 1949

Needless to say I view your retirement from the Navy with sincere regret. I think that in these days of light thinking everywhere, we need a few gentlemen to whom one can turn for reassurance as to the accuracy of one's views.

With best wishes for your welfare and with deepest appreciation of your many kindnesses to me throughout the years, I remain, as ever

Your old friend,

R. W. Bates

RWB:ags

0799

September 29, 1949

Dear Bill:

This letter is to extend to you my personal appreciation, as well as the appreciation of the many officers whom I know in this area, at your success with the Military Pay Bill. I believe that the good effects of this bill will be felt immediately, not necessarily in a reduction of the number of officers who resign, but in the morale of those who remain.

You have done a great many excellent jobs in your life, not the least of which were those connected with the landings in the Solomon Islands, as well as that at Hollandia. However, I feel that, for over-all effect, your Military Pay Bill should have even more far reaching results.

With warmest personal regards, I am

As Ever,

RICHARD W. BATES
Commodore, USN (Ret.)

RWB:ca

Vice Admiral William M. Fechteler, USN
Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Personnel)
Room 4E526 ND, Department of the Navy
Pentagon Building
Arlington, Virginia

0800

September 29, 1949

Dear Bill:

When I was about to be recalled to active duty, the Chief of Naval Personnel suggested to Admiral Seary he request that I be ordered back to duty as a Rear Admiral. He did this, but owing to circumstances beyond control at the time, the Retired List of Rear Admirals became filled before my appointment could be forwarded.

However, when I discussed this matter with you, you told me that Rear Admiral Murphy at Guam would be retired on 1 October, at which time -- you did not actually say this but I inferred it -- there might be a chance to advance me for a month or more prior to my possible final retirement.

Therefore, I am writing this letter to alert you to my position in this matter and to hope that you will see fit to advance me now.

I am particularly interested because even here in the War College it is difficult for the officers and it is certainly difficult for my many friends in town to understand my position as Commodore, when they all know that I am a Rear Admiral (Ret.). The matter isn't too serious, but I think that it would improve, not only my morale, but also the morale of the officers of the War College, when they see the attention which you give to the advancement of those who have made a particular study of war. That, of course, is the sine qua non of the War College.

With warmest personal regards, I am

As Ever,

RICHARD W. BATES
Commodore, USN (Ret.)

RWB:ca
Air Mail

Vice Admiral William M. Fechteler, USN
Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Personnel)
Room 4E526 ND, Department of the Navy
Pentagon Building
Arlington, Virginia

0801

21 October, 1949

From: Rear-Admiral R.W. BATES, USN(Ret).
To : Chief of the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery.
Subj: Information for My Medical Record.
Enclosure: (A) Letter from Howard B. Sprague, M.D., dated
March 15, 1949.
(B) Letter from Howard B. Sprague, M.D., dated
October 4, 1949.

1. I was retired for physical disability on April 30th, 1949 with coronary artery trouble - left bundle branch block.
2. Realizing that I was to be retired and on the suggestion of the Naval Hospital, Newport, R.I., I made an appointment with Howard B. Sprague, M.D., well known cardiologist and Head of the American Heart Association, for a consultation. This consultation was held on March 14th, 1947 at Dr. Sprague's office in Brookline, Boston, Massachusetts. As a consequence of this consultation, Dr. Sprague wrote me a letter, Enclosure (A).
3. During September, 1949, at Dr. Sprague's request, I had an additional consultation with him also at Brookline. As a consequence of this consultation, Dr. Sprague wrote me a letter, Enclosure (B).
4. Attention is particularly invited to the last paragraph of Enclosure (B) which states that my percentage of physical disability is not less than 85%. In addition to the comments in the enclosures, Dr. Sprague told me that:
 - (A) I was zero as an insurance risk.
 - (B) My life was shortened.
 - (C) Despite my healthy appearance, the only good thing medically that I have in my life is the "advanced age of my parents".
5. This information is being forwarded for inclusion in my medical record as it completely supports the Naval decision in my case and covers my physical condition at the time of my retirement. It is forwarded for consideration in conjunction with my record in the determination of my percentage of physical disability under the Military Pay Bill.

R. W. BATES

0802

NAVAL WAR COLLEGE
NEWPORT, R. I.

October 24, 1949

Caplain
Commander Robert Bell (MC) USN
Bureau of Yards & Docks Annex
Bureau of Medicine and Surgery
Navy Department
Washington, D. C.

Caplain
Dear Commander Bell:

It was a great pleasure to renew with you an acquaintance of long ago and to discover that my physical ailments were not only well known by you but had been a source of concern. The Navy is getting so big that all of us feel a little less known than heretofore so it was gratifying to discover a friend.

In accordance with your recommendations I have forwarded the letters concerning my case, as written by Dr. Howard Sprague, to the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery. I indicated on the envelope that they were to be sent to you so I am hoping that this was done, that you received them, and that you have been able to give them proper redirection.

Admiral Beary today dispatched a message to the Bureau of Personnel asking for my retention upon active duty until 1 January. This was done on your recommendation. I think that it is a wise idea. I, therefore, assuming favorable action by the Bureau of Personnel, expect to be up here until about 1 January 1950. I trust that by then we will have fully completed the papers in my case. As I told you before I shall be very happy to appear before your board in Washington whenever you so desire and I really have no objection to being a guinea pig, if such is necessary.

It has dawned on me since speaking to you that in view of the fact that my disability has now completed 3 years and is on its 4th year with no improvement whatsoever, that it might be advisable to call me a permanent case. What do you think?

| |
|----|
| 00 |
| 01 |
| 10 |
| 11 |
| 12 |
| 13 |
| 14 |
| 15 |
| 16 |
| 17 |
| 18 |
| 19 |
| 20 |
| |
| |
| |
| |

0803

24 October 1949

I was very sorry that I missed Admiral Swanson when I was in Washington but Admiral Pugh was very kind and receptive. Please tell Admiral Swanson of my interest and my hope that I will see him soon again.

With warmest regards, I am as ever

Your old friend,

R. W. Bates

RWB:ags

NAVAL WAR COLLEGE
NEWPORT, R.I.

October 24, 1949

Rear Admiral Frank T. Watkins, USN
Bureau of Naval Personnel
Arlington, Virginia

Dear Admiral Watkins:

It was a great pleasure to discover that you are an Assistant Chief of the Bureau of Personnel. I had heard a great many friendly remarks concerning you but I hadn't realized until I saw you that you were the Watkins that had been honored by that assignment. I was also pleased to hear from you about Swede and Ibby. They certainly are a swell pair! After seeing you in the Bureau I saw Admiral Roper and Admiral Fechteler concerning my retention on duty until January 1st to complete the Battle of Savo Island. I told Admiral Beary this morning that the period from now to January 1st would at present sight be sufficient, and so the Admiral by dispatch has requested my retention for that time.

Also I told the Admiral that you and Fechteler and Roper had stated that extending my retention for two months was a simple matter. I therefore am looking for favorable action.

Very frankly, I am highly interested in this work and have received so many friendly letters and thoughtful comments on my previous books that I think it would be too bad if I were not allowed to finish this one. I feel sure that when you read it you will be astonished at what went on and will be further astonished at the decisions made at the various levels on both sides. As one officer said after reading the rough draft "All Lessons of War are contained in this Volume."

With warmest personal regards to you and with appreciation for your interest in my welfare, I am as ever

Your old friend,

R. W. Bates

RWB:ags

| |
|----|
| 00 |
| 01 |
| 10 |
| 11 |
| 12 |
| 13 |
| 14 |
| 15 |
| 16 |
| 17 |
| 18 |
| 19 |
| 20 |
| |
| |
| |
| |

0805

Naval War College
Newport, Rhode Island
7 November 1949

Dear Lynde:

I called you last night to tell you how pleased I was that you had taken the assignment with Sherman to be his Vice Chief of Naval Operations. I can not begin to tell you what a gratification it was to me to know that an officer of your high attainments had agreed to serve at this difficult time in the fortunes of the Navy.

I told your Missus that I remembered how at Okinawa, when we were preparing to fight the remainder of the Japanese Fleet headed by the YAMATO, you had come aboard our Flagship and on seeing me had said: "What! You here?" I said: "Yes, I'm here." Then you said: "How long have you been here?" I replied: "The whole time that we've been here." You then said, I suppose somewhat to Admiral Deyo's discomfiture, "Well, you should have sent out a signal saying that you were here, so that we could have slept nights."

Today I am returning that compliment, as I feel that I, for one, can sleep nights, with you in power in Washington. I feel sure that you will be highly successful, and I like particularly the fact that you will be able to "call your shots" as to your future.

Of course, you realize that anyone who takes a job of this kind, at this time, is going to be viewed with interest and possibly with suspicion by his many colleagues who will want to be reassured that the Navy is not going to lose out under the present Administration. Knowing you as well as I do, I feel confident that I shall be able to say to any of these questioners that there need be no concern about you. I thoroughly believe this!

It was wonderful to talk to "Lil" on the phone and she is as delighted as I am over your new responsibilities.

I will probably see you out on the Coast before you ever leave for Washington and we will talk this over.

With warmest personal regards, and with the confidence that the Navy is in safe hands, I am, as ever,

Your old friend,

R. W. BATES

Rear Admiral Lynde McCormick, USN
Commandant, 12th Naval District
Federal Building
San Francisco, California

0806

Naval War College
Newport, Rhode Island
8 Nov 1949

Dear Sherman:

We all know that a great opportunity has again come to you to demonstrate the same high qualities of leadership and knowledge of war which you so ably displayed in the Western Pacific as Assistant to our beloved Nimitz.

I feel sure that despite a lot of propaganda in the press, pro and con, you will fully prove to all of your brother officers as well as to the Country at large, that your advancement was an eminently correct one.

The Navy and the Marine Corps enjoy a tremendous hold on the imagination not only of our own nation, but also of all other nations bordering on the sea. I think that that hold was somewhat shaken in the last few months, but if the whole affair has succeeded in fostering more fully the interest of our Congress and our people in our Navy, I feel confident that it will have produced very good results for all.

I know that you have taken on a big, tough job of transcendent military importance and there is much at stake in it for all of us. However, I am sure that you and Lynde McCormick who is to succeed my good friend, John Dale Price, can handle it, to the satisfaction and benefit of the Nation. As for Lynde McCormick, I must state here that he is a great and dear friend of mine and an officer in whom most of his associates have implicit confidence. I have been with him in war and peace, and I know that he is brilliantly able. Thank you for choosing him!

I was very sorry to see Louis go. He certainly endeared himself to his Countrymen. I feel confident that you will do likewise.

With warmest personal regards, I am

Very sincerely yours,

R. W. BATES

Admiral Forrest P. Sherman, USN
Chief of Naval Operations
Department of the Navy
Washington, D. C.

0807

22 December, 1949

Dear Mr. Wells:-

I cannot begin to tell you of the pleasure I received when a portrait of myself done by you arrived this morning. The portrait seems to be an excellent likeness and my staff are visibly impressed with your great ability not only to paint but to bring life and color to the canvas.

I note that the painting appears to be a gift. I judge this from the "Merry Christmas" on it. Naturally I cannot accept it as a gift not only because of your connection with the Audio Company but, also, because you work for a living as do I, and should receive payment for your labor. Of course you realize that I am operating in a somewhat official capacity with the Audio Company and therefore, ipso facto, I cannot allow myself to accept gifts from anyone even remotely connected with that firm. I am sure that you can understand this.

However, I should like very much to retain the portrait, and will gladly pay you for it, providing you will set on it a fair and reasonable price.

May I ask you to advise me as to your wishes in this matter?

With best wishes for a Merry Christmas and with appreciation of your thoughtfulness which is certainly typical of the Yultide season, I am

Very truly yours

Rear-Admiral, USN(ret)

Mr. A. Wells,
42-24 208th St.,
Bayside, Long Island,
New York.

0000

25 January 1950

CONFIDENTIAL

Captain Thomas Burrowes, USN
Room 4C-539
Pentagon Building
Washington, D.C.

Dear Burrowes:

I can not thank you too much for your extremely friendly and intelligent interest in assisting the War College in obtaining the desired translations for the Battle for Leyte Gulf. I feel quite confident that without your help, we will accomplish nothing. I have spoken to Admiral Beary and told him of our difficulties with the Central Intelligence Agency and of your plan to send the material for translation to Admiral Joy in Tokyo. I told the Admiral that the plan was for Admiral Joy to set up a translation section at his Headquarters there.

I have not, as yet, received Admiral Hellenkoetter's letter concerning the report from his investigation of the Japanese reports in the National Archives. However, as I remember he said, in part, that only 11 of these desired reports were at present in the Archives and that 36 others had been drawn out by one of the Historical Divisions -- I think, he said, by the Navy. It is therefore possible that these reports are in the Navy Department somewhere. I will send you a copy of Admiral Hellenkoetter's letter when I receive it.

I don't know how you plan to handle your dealings with Admiral Joy, but I was delighted at the confident manner with which you approached this problem. I could see that you had had problems of this kind before and knew how to get around them.

Admiral Joy happens to be a very close personal friend of mine, so if you will let me know when you send your first Battle Reports for translation to him, I will write him a personal letter from here to explain fully what we are after. That should facilitate not only the obtaining of the translations but may facilitate obtaining only that portion necessary for this Battle.

(a true copy held in Archives
in File marked "LEYTE GULF")

0809

In this connection, I think that Admiral Hollenkoetter's translators felt that they had to translate a whole book and so commented to him. I told Admiral Hollenkoetter that this was not so -- that it was solely necessary to scan and to translate those sections which appear important. This is the way I worked with the Washington Document Center and it was highly effective.

I hope that you will see fit to send some of these papers to Tokyo right away so that Admiral Joy can get started on them immediately. As Admiral Joy did a lot of fighting out in the Western Pacific, I feel sure that he understands our problem. In fact, he told me that he had been very much impressed with the first two books, namely, The Battle of The Coral Sea and the Battle of Midway, and hoped to study them very thoroughly again during his leisure time in the Far East. Whether he has any leisure time now, with the Chinese Communist situation what it is, is anybody's guess.

I was sorry that I did not see Admiral Briscoe when I was in Washington, but I went into his office four times and once stayed for several hours talking with Admiral Settle, but Admiral Briscoe did not show up. The rumor was that he was at a lecture course at the National War College.

I would like to suggest that should you require it, you communicate with Captain E. T. Layton, USN, or Lt. Roger Pineau, USNR, both of whom are Japanese translators and both of whom are thoroughly behind the idea of having the translations done in Tokyo.

With warmest personal regards and with many thanks for your assistance and loyal support, I am, as ever

Your old friend,

R. W. BATES
Commodore, USN

RWB:ca

CONFIDENTIAL

(a true copy held in Archives
in folder marked "LEYTE GULF")

CROPPY
C-O-P-Y

0810

NAVAL WAR COLLEGE
NEWPORT, R.I. April, 1950

Dear General Lanahan:

Thank you very much for your kind invitation to be one of your guests at the Signal Corps Center, Fort Monmouth, New Jersey, on First Army Day. I should have enjoyed attending. Unfortunately, I shall be so busy here at that time that I am unable to accept your thoughtful invitation.

As I am only on temporary duty here -- I am physically disabled -- I thought that possibly you had intended your invitation for the President of the Naval War College -- Vice Admiral Donald Beary, U.S.N. I, therefore, showed your letter to him.

Vice Admiral Beary stated that, if by chance your kind invitation was intended for him, both he and his staff would be unable to accept owing to the many responsibilities which fall on the War College at this time.

I feel confident that you will have a most successful day.

Very sincerely,

R. W. Bates
Rear Admiral, U.S.N. (Ret.)

Major General F. H. Lanahan, U.S.A
Commanding General
Signal Corps Center and Fort Monmouth
Fort Monmouth, N.J.

| |
|----|
| 00 |
| 01 |
| 10 |
| 11 |
| 12 |
| 13 |
| 14 |
| 15 |
| 16 |
| 17 |
| 18 |
| 19 |
| 20 |
| 21 |
| |
| |
| |

0811

Naval War College,
Newport, Rhode Island.

April 26, 1950.

Dear Mr. Blair,

Thank you again for coming up here yesterday and putting on that fine show. There is considerable discussion here today by those who witnessed the showing and all is highly favorable.

There are a few suggestions:

- (1) The pronunciation of the name HAMMAN is on the first syllable, like the word "ham".
- (2) It has been suggested that where the Japanese speaker has discussed some Japanese decision and then says "This was correct" or "this was sound" it would improve the film if the comments concerning whether it was sound or not were made in an American voice. It is the Analyst who says it is correct not the Japanese.
- (3) The comment of the narrator that the Japanese force was going Southwest when the film showed it proceeding Southeast. (There were reportedly two occasions of this).
- (4) The bombers which attacked Tulagi were armed with one thousand pound bombs. The aviators think that the film showed them armed with two one hundred pound bombs. It would be well to check this. We must be correct in live film to the time (May 1942).
- (5) The Yorktown reported that the torpedoes were dropped from an altitude of about fifty feet. Our film showed them dropped at much higher altitudes. It might be well to screen the film material for lower drops. Not necessarily for fifty feet, but for drops lower than some of those shown.

Many thanks my friend.

Very Sincerely,

R. W. BATES,
Rear Admiral, U.S.N. (Ret)

Film Graphics Inc.
245 West 55th Street
New York, New York

0812

Naval War College,
Newport, Rhode Island.

June 13, 1950.

Dear Burrowes:

Our good friend Roger Pineau came up to see me about the results of his trip to Japan. I told him that he must contact you immediately as you are the "decider" of destinies, not me. I won't attempt to say here what he told me for by the time you receive this you probably will have seen him and heard the story. It is more bad than good although the situation is far from being bad I think.

I hope to be down in Washington about June 22nd when I shall bring the completed Savo Island to BuPers for publication by that Bureau through the Government Printing Office. It should be out in a few months. I had the final draft most carefully reviewed by Admiral Kent Hewitt, USN who worked on it for about three weeks in my office. He was thoroughly impressed, offered some highly constructive ideas, and declared the book to be fascinating and monumental. He was particularly impressed with the many battle lessons. If I can get the Navy to have the same opinion that Admiral Hewitt has and if Naval officers will read it as carefully as he did then I shall consider my labor well spent.

Finally of course there has to be a decision about the Leyte Gulf analysis. I agreed, on the particular request of both Admirals Beary and Brown, to do this job as they say they do not know another officer in the Navy who can do it and none who are willing to do it. I think that I am still physically capable of doing the job. I shall be glad therefore to go ahead. But I must have Japanese translations. There is enough data to work on the Allied side for a time, but I wish to write the Battle in this order:

- (a) Background, both Japanese and Allied.
- (b) Surigao Strait.

Therefore, I need considerable data concerning the Japanese set up and what went on in each of the Japanese ships that survived the battle of Surigao Strait as well as any statements by the Commanders concerned - their estimates of the situation etc. I need very little from most of the ships of the Combined Fleet to start with. I shall need them later - much later.

Anyway I shall see you and after seeing you I shall contact Johnny Roper to discuss with him any action necessary concerning me. You see my tour of duty expires on 30 June and

0813

will have to be extended if the job is to be done.

Once again, in my opinion, and in the opinion of every officer I have spoken to including both Oldendorf and Kincaid the job should be done now. Oldendorf wants me to do it - so does McCormick who wrote me that I must not quit.

As ever,

Yours sincerely,

R. W. BATES,
Commodore, U.S. Navy (Ret.)

Captain T. Burrowes, USN,
Room 4C 539,
National Defense Building,
Washington 25, D. C.

0814

At about 0145, the CHICAGO noted that the CANBERRA was swinging to starboard. The Officer of the Deck of the CHICAGO must have assumed that the CANBERRA had turned to starboard for one of two reasons: (a) that she had sighted something which required an emergency turn, or (b) that she had suffered a steering casualty. He could normally have expected to be advised immediately in either event; but in this case he was doomed to disappointment, for the CANBERRA made no report.

However, he did not have long to wonder, for at 0146 as the CANBERRA moved to starboard, the Officer of the Deck noted two dark objects between the CANBERRA and the PATTERSON, and one other object to the right of the CANBERRA.* Viewing from the left, the first two objects were the KINUGASA and KAKO; the object to the right of the CANBERRA was the AOBA. It is assumed that the Officer of the Deck sounded "General Quarters" at this time bringing the Commanding Officer to the bridge almost immediately. Meanwhile, he continued to follow in the wake of the CANBERRA, and made preparations to fire a star shell spread to starboard in order to illuminate the AOBA. (See Plate VII)

Once the Commanding Officer was on the bridge and had familiarized himself with the unusual circumstances of the situation, is it not surprising that he did not immediately attempt to broadcast a general warning to the entire task force via TBS voice radio about the presence of the enemy ships, including any amplifying information available such as: enemy types, formation or disposition, location, course and speed? Having failed to do this, is it not equally surprising that he did not attempt to notify either Commander VINCENTNES Group - who, as Screening Commander in the absence of CTG 62.6, was in command of the western screen, and therefore responsible for the coordination of the screening groups for battle, or CTG 62.6 who, as overall Screening Commander, might still be able to direct some defensive measures even though he was located for the moment in Transport Area XRAY? Similar questions could be asked regarding his failure to notify CTF 61, CTF 62, CTF 63 and COMSOPACFOR.

He not only failed in his responsibility as regards these matters but he also failed in his additional responsibilities as Commander CHICAGO Group. He, of course, knew that the CANBERRA was cognizant of the situation; for she was already maneuvering for position. But what about the BAGLEY and the PATTERSON? It was his responsibility, as Officer-in-Tactical Command of this group to lead it into battle and to give the necessary orders to his four ships in order that this might be effectively done. He did not do this but instead allowed each ship to operate independently. Perhaps he found himself unable to perform the dual function of Group Commander and Commanding Officer, or perhaps under the pressure of events he simply forgot that he was the Group Commander. His failure to exercise command properly contributed in a large degree to the unfortunate events which were to follow in Iron Bottom Sound.

* Action Report, CHICAGO, Concerning Action Against Enemy Forces, August 9th, 1942, Guadalcanal-Tulagi Area, Serial 099, August 13th, 1942.

CONFIDENTIAL

she must have lost sight of her shortly, for she rediscovered the PATTISON on her port beam about two minutes later. This emphasizes the need for keeping own forces together during night or low visibility in order to avoid confusion and to avoid the possibility of firing on own ships. It also emphasizes the fact that a Commanding Officer, who can feel confident that any ship sighted during night action is enemy, has a marked initial advantage over a Commanding Officer who is forced to withhold fire until the enemy nature of the ship sighted has been determined. 0147

The Commanding Officer, CHICAGO now, at 0152, with no target, decided to examine his ship to ascertain the extent of damage sustained from the torpedo hit which he had received shortly after 0157. This inspection disclosed the flooding of compartments and a hole in the second platform deck, forward of Frame 15, and in the first platform deck, forward of Frame 10. The damage was in the process of being brought under control and the strength bulkheads were being shored up preparatory to increased speed.*

The Commanding Officer decided to test the strength of these shored up bulkheads, and commenced increasing speed to throw increased pressure on them. Although he ran at a higher speed for a period of but two minutes, and therefore, had succeeded in increasing speed only slightly, he decided that the CHICAGO would be able to operate safely at twenty-five knots.

About this time, at 0154, the CHICAGO completed decoding a message to withdraw towards Lengo Channel. Although the Commanding Officer did not give the text, the originator or the addressees of this message, it probably was the one from Commander Transport Squadron YOKE who had gotten his ships underway from the Tulagi anchorage at 0150.

Between 0154 and 0200, the CHICAGO continued on to the westward; and neither participated in any action nor reported sighting any action. It appears likely that during this period her vision was blanketed by the cloud bank south of Savo Island so that she did not observe the Japanese Eastern Group as it drew off to the northeastward. At the end of this period, the CHICAGO was 16,500 yards from the CHOKAI and but 13,000 yards from the KINUGASA.

The Commanding Officer, CHICAGO was alerted to the fact that a battle was still underway in his area at 0200, when he observed gun action between unidentified ships to the westward of Savo Island.* This was undoubtedly the brief battle between the damaged and retiring American destroyer JARVIS and the Japanese destroyer YUNAGI. The plot on Diagram "G" discloses that these destroyers were about 14,000 yards away on bearing 300°(T) at this time.

* Action Report CHICAGO concerning Action Against Enemy Forces August 9th, 1942, Guadalcanal-Tulagi Area, Serial 099, August 13th, 1942.

CONFIDENTIAL

0816

How can the Navy best prepare her prospective commanders for command? The answer presents itself (a) by instilling in them as early as possible the fundamentals of warfare which in turn requires a knowledge of history by land, sea and air; (b) by providing them with the maximum mental training in the art and science of war; (c) by giving them the opportunity for study and reflection, and for the exchange of views within and among the several echelons of command; (d) and finally by providing them with the maximum practical training in fleet and task group maneuvers as well as in maneuvers of lesser scope.

There should be, in addition to the above training, a ruthless and impartial elimination of those whom such maneuvers and mental training show to be lacking in initiative or to be lacking in the ability to make prompt and sound decisions under the pressure of fast moving events.

How can a prospective commander best prepare himself for command? Marshal Foch answers this as follows: "One is not born with learning. Everyone of us must make for himself his faith, his connections, his knowledge of things. Here again the result will not be produced by a sudden revelation of light coming in a flash or by an instantaneous development of our faculties. We shall only reach it by a continuous effort of penetration, absorption, assimilation, by a repeated and detailed labor."*

There is no substitute in war for the brain tempered by experience!

* * *

20. The Commander Expeditionary Force, CTF 61, retired from the objective area with the Air Support Group, TG 61.1 before his covering operation had been completed. By so doing, he left the Amphibious Force without any air cover. This caused the Commander Amphibious Force, CTF 62, to retire TF 62 before the transports and cargo ships could be more than partially unloaded. This, in turn, left the First Marine Division alone in the Tulagi-Guadalcanal Area exposed to Japanese attacks by air, sea and land without air cover or naval surface support. It also left this division without adequate supplies, either of food or ammunition, without any long range warning or fire control radar sets, without the motor transport repair section or its equipment which caused the immobilization of certain vehicles and without any heavy construction equipment. All of this equipment remained in the holds of the transports and cargo ships.

* The Principles of War by Marshal Ferdinand Foch, French Army, Chapter I, Published by Chapman and Hall, London, 1921.

CONFIDENTIAL

0817

ship in the Japanese column - 5200 yards astern of the CHOKAI, or six minutes run at twenty-six knots - would have placed her at 0146 in approximately the vicinity of the CHOKAI's 0140 position. The actual range from the PATTERSON to the FURUTAKA was 3700 yards rather than the 5000 yards she reported. (See Plate VIII)

It has been suggested that the PATTERSON's screening position to the west of the CANBERRA should have made it possible for her to sight the enemy before other ships in the CHICAGO Group, particularly before the BAGLEY. Plotting analysis proves otherwise, for the BAGLEY's screening station - nearly a mile north of the CANBERRA and therefore about 2500 yards northeast of the PATTERSON - was in much better position to contact the CHOKAI at 0144 at the range of 2800 yards, as pointed out in the previous section. Under the weather conditions, PATTERSON and BAGLEY were not in sight contact with each other.

The Commanding Officer, PATTERSON - who was on the bridge when contact was made - immediately sounded "General Quarters", and endeavored to notify the CANBERRA and CHICAGO by blinker signal, and by broadcasting over TBS voice radio at about 0146: "Warning! Warning! Strange ship entering harbor."* The CANBERRA was already engaged with the enemy, and although she saw the visual signaling** she was too busy to reply. It is doubtful that either the CHICAGO or CANBERRA received the voice warning.

The Commanding Officer rang up maximum speed at 0146½ and altered course to port in order to unmask his starboard gun and torpedo batteries.*** This change of course is considered sound for by changing course to port the PATTERSON should have succeeded in rapidly launching her torpedoes to starboard. This was so important as to take priority over all other objectives. A change of course to starboard would probably have delayed the firing of the torpedoes as much as several minutes. It might also have caused her to foul the line of fire of her own heavy cruisers.

As the PATTERSON swung to port, the Commanding Officer directed that the torpedoes be fired when ready; but the Torpedo Officer failed to hear this order,*** and the torpedoes were not fired as the PATTERSON steadied on heading 270°(T). Consequently the FURUTAKA escaped without being hit, and was observed by the PATTERSON to turn left to a northerly course at 0147½.*** (See Plate IX)

As the FURUTAKA cleared the range, the PATTERSON observed two other Japanese cruisers farther beyond on bearing 70° relative, a true bearing of 340°. She identified them as one MOGAMI Class and one JINTSU Class

* Written Statement August 10th, 1942, by Lt. (jg) C.P. Clarke, USNR, Quincy.

** Report of Cdr. J.A. Walsh, Executive Officer, CANBERRA, August 12th, 1942, to CTF 44 (CTG 62.6) Concerning Loss of CANBERRA.

*** Action Report PATTERSON, Engagement with Enemy Surface Ships Night August 8th-9th, 1942, Savo-Guadalcanal-Tulagi Area, Serial 001, August 13th, 1942.

CONFIDENTIAL